

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-8 and 11-14 are presently active; Claims 1, 9, and 10 having been cancelled without prejudice, and Claims 2, 11, 12 having been amended by the present amendment. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Higashi (U.S. Pat. No. 5,223,656). Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higashi. Claims 2-4, 11, and 12-14 were objected to for being dependent from a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 5-8 were indicated as being allowed.

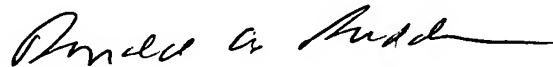
Firstly, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 2-4, 11, and 12-14 and the indication of allowance for Claims 5-8. In order to expedite prosecution of the present application, Claims 1, 9, and 10 have been cancelled, and Claims 2, 11, and 12 have been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2, 11, and 12 and the claims dependent therefrom are in a condition for allowance.

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Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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